

THE
GLORY and INTEREST
OF

Nations professing the GOSPEL.

Opened in A

Ser. 1st

SERMON

Preached at a private Fast to the Com-
mons Assembled

IN

PARLIAMENT.

Published by their Command.

By John Owen, D.D.

LONDON,

Printed for Philemon Stephens, at the Gilded Lion in
St. Pauls Church yard, 1659.

THE
UNION and INTEREST

Various Editions of the O. C. C.

SEERMON

Various Editions of the O. C. C.

PARLIAMENT

Published by the O. C. C.

By the O. C. C.

1801

Printed for the O. C. C. by the O. C. C.
St. Paul's Churchyard, 1801.

TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE

THE
Commons of England Assembled in
Parliament.

I Need not give any other account of my Publishing this ensuing short discourse, then that which was also the ground and reason of its preaching, namely your command. Those who are not satisfied therewith, I shall not endeavour to tender further grounds of satisfaction unto, as not having any persuasion of prevailing if I should attempt it. Prejudice so far oftentimes prevails even on good souls, that satisfaction will not speedily thrive and grow in them. That which exempts me from solicitousness about the frame and temper of mens minds and spirits in the entertainment of discourses of this nature

The Epistle Dedicatory.

nature, is the annexing of that injunction unto our commission in delivering the word of God: it must be done whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Without therefore any plea or Apologie, for what ever may seem most to need it in this Sermon, I devolve the whole account of the rise and issue it had, or may have on the providence of God in my call, and your command. Only I shall crave leave to adde that in my waiting for a little leasure to recollect what had I delivered; out of my own short notes and others (that I might not preach one Sermon and print another) there were some considerations that fell in exciting me to the obedience I had purposed. The desire I had to make more publick at this time and season the Testimony given in simplicity of spirit to the interest of Christ in these nations, and therein to the true real interest of these Nations themselves, which was my naked designe openly managed and persued with all plainnesse of speech as the small portion of time allotted to this exercise would allow) was the chief of them. Solicitations of some particular friends, gave also warmth unto that consideration. I must further confesse that I was a little moved by some mistakes that were delivered into the hands of report, to be managed to the discountenance of the

the honest and plain truth contended for, especially when I found them without due consideration exposed in Print unto publick view. That is the manner of these dayes wherein we live. I know full well, that there is not any thing from the beginning to the ending of this short discourse that doth really interfere with any form of civil Government in the world, administered according to righteousness and equity: as there is not in the Gospel of Christ or in any of the concernments of it. And I am assured also that the truth proposed in it encompasses the whole ground of any just expectation of the continuance of the presence of God amongst us, and his acceptation of our endeavours about the allotment and just disposal of our civil affaires, let other lay what weight they will or please, upon the lesser differences that are amongst us on any account what ever; if this should be safe, this principle maintained and established, that is here laid down, and the just Rights of the Nation laid in a way of administration suited unto its preservation and furtherance I, shall not easily be cast down from my hopes, that amongst us poor unprofitable unthankful, creatures as we are, we may yet see the fruit of Righteousnesse to be peace, and the effect of Righteousnesse quietnesse and assurance

urance for evermore. For those then who shall
cast their eye on this paper, I would begg of them
to lay aside all those prejudices against persons or
things which their various contexture in our pub-
lick affaires may possibly have raised in them. I
know how vain, for the most part expectations of
prevailing in such a desire, by naked requests, are.
But sick men must be groaning though they look for
no relief thereby. Wherefore committing it into that
hand, wherein lie also your hearts and mine, I shall
commend it for your use unto the Soveraigne grace
of him who is able to work all your present works
for you, and which is more, to give you an inheri-
tance among them that are sanctified.

Sopraves

Your servant in the work of our

Lord Jesus Christ and his

Gospel.

J. O.

A Sermon Preached within the Commons-
House of Parliament, at a Fast by them so-
lemnly held upon the 4. of February, 1658. 1659

Isa. 4. 5.

— Upon all the Glory shall be a defence.



He design of this Chapter is to give in relief
against outward perplexing extremities from
Gospel promises, and the presence of Christ
with his people in those extremities.

The next intendment of the words in the
Type, seems to relate to the deliverance of the People of
the Jews from the Babilonish captivity, and the presence
of God amongst them upon their return; God frequent-
ly taking occasion from thence, to mind them of the Co-
venant of Grace, with the full ratification and publicati-
on of it by Christ, as is evident from Jer. 31. and 32. and
sundry other places.

As to our purpose, we have considerable in the Chapter,
the Persons to whom these promises are given; the con-
dition wherein they were; and the promises themselves,
that are made to them for their supportment and conso-
lation.

The persons intended are the Remnant, the Escaping,
the evasion of Israel; as the word signifies, ver. 2. they
that are left, that remain, ver. 3. who escape the great de-
solation that was to come on the body of the People, the
furnace they were to pass through. Only in the close of
that verse, they have a farther description added of them,
from the purpose of God concerning their grace and glo-

2. The Presence of Christ with a People.

17. they are *written among the living*, or rather *written unto life*; every one that is *written*, that is *designed unto life in Jerusalem*.

As to the persons in themselves considered, the application is easie unto this *Assembly*: Are you not the *remnant*, the *escaping of England*? Is not this a *brand plucked out of the fire*? Are you not they that are *left*, they that *remain*, from great trials and desolations; the Lord grant that the *application* may hold out, and abide to the end of the *Prophecie*.

2. The *condition* that this *remnant* or *escaping* had been in is laid down in some *figurative* expressions concerning the *smallness* of this *remnant*, or the *paucity* of them that should escape, and the *greatness* of the *extremities* they should be exercised withal. I cannot insist on particulars; it may suffice that *great distresses* and *calamities* are intimated therein; and such have the days of our former trials and troubles been to some of us.

3. The *Promises* here made to this *People*, thus escaped from great distresses are of two sorts. 1. *Original or fundamental*, and then *consequential* thereon.

1. There is the great *spring or fountain promise*, from which all others as lesser *streams* do flow; and that is the promise of *Christ himself* unto them, and amongst them; *ver. 2.* He is that *branch of Jehovah*, and that fruit of the earth, *which is there promised*. He is the bottom and foundation, the spring and fountain of all the good that is or shall be communicated unto us, all other promises are but *rivulets* from that unsearchable *ocean* of *Grace and love*, that is in the promise of *Christ*; of which afterwards.

2. The promises that are derived and flow from hence may be referred unto three heads. 1. Of *beauty and glory*, *ver. 2.* 2. Of *holiness and purity*, *ver. 3, 4.* 3. Of *preservation and safety*, *ver. 5, 6.*

My

My Text lies among the *last* sort, and not intending long to detain you, I shall passe over the *other*, and immediately close with that of our present concernment.

Now this promise of v. 5. is of a comprehensive nature, and relates to *spiritual* and *temporal* safety or preservation; Godliness though it be not much believed, yet indeed hath the promises of this life, and that which is to come.

I shall a little open the *words* of the verse, & thereby give *light* to those which I have chosen peculiarly to insist upon. It is, as I have said *safety* and preservation both *spiritual* and *temporal* that is here engaged for; and concerning it we have considerable;

1. *The manner of its production*; I will create it saith God. There is a creating power, needful to be exerted, for the preservation of *Stons* remnant. Their preservation must be of Gods creation. It is, not onely, not to be educed out of any other *principle* or to be wrought by any other *means*; but it must, as it were by the Almighty power of God, be brought out of *nothing*; God must create it. At least, as there were two sorts of Gods creatures at the beginning, that *dark body* of matter, whose rise was meerly from nothing; and those things which from that dark confused heap, he made to be *other things*, then what they were therein; it is of the last sort of *creatures* if not of the first. If the preservation of this *Remnant* be not out of *nothing*, without any means at all; yet it is for the most part from that darknesse and confusion of things, which contributes very little or nothing towards it; I will create it saith God; and whilst he continues possessed of his *creating power*, it shall be well with his *Israel*.

2. For the *nature* of it, it is here set out, under the termes of that *eminent* pledge of the presence of God

with the people in the Wildernesse, for their guidance and protection, in the midst of all their difficulties and hazards, by a pillar of cloud, and a flaming fire; this guided them thorow the Sea, and continued with them after the setting up of the *Tabernacle* in the Wildernesse 40. years. The use, and efficacy of that *pillar*, the intendment of God in it, the Advantage of the people by it, I cannot stay to unfold. It may suffice in general that it was a great and signal pledge of Gods presence with them for their guidance and preservation; that they might act according to his will, and enjoy safety in so doing. Onely whereas this promise here respects *Gospel times*, the nature of the mercy promised is enlarged, and thereby somewhat changed. In the wildernesse there was but *one Tabernacle*; and so consequently *one cloude* by day, and *one pillar of fire* by night was a sufficient pledge of the presence of God with the whole people; there are now *many dwelling places*, many *Assemblies* of mount *Sion*; and in the enlargement of mercy and grace under the Gospel, the same pledge of Gods presence and favour is promised to every one of them as was before to the whole. The word we have translated a *dwelling place*, denotes not a *common habitation*, but a *place prepared for God*; and is the same with the *Assemblies* and *Congregations* in the expression following. The sum of all is; God by his creating power, in despite of all opposition will bring forth preservation for his people, guiding them in paths wherein they shall finde peace and safety.

Onely ye may observe the order and dependance of these promises; the promise of holinesse v.4. lies in order, before that of safety v.5. Unlesse our filth and our blood be purged away, by a spirit of judgement, and a spirit of burning; its in vain for us, to look for the pillar and the cloud,

If we are not interested in holiness, we shall not be interested in safety; I mean as it lies in the promise, and is a mercy washed in the blood of Jesus; for as for the peace of the world, I regard it not. Let not men of polluted hearts, and defiled hands, once imagine, that God cares for them in an especial manner. If our filth and our blood, our sin and our corruption abide upon us, and we are delivered, it will be for a greater ruine; the way unto the cloud and pillar, is by the spirit of judgement and burning.

The words of my Text are a recapitulation of the whole *versé*; and are a Gospel promise given out in Law terms, or a New Testament mercy, under Old Testament expressions.

I shall then briefly shew you these two things; 1. What is here expressed as to the Type and Figure. 2. What is here intended as to the Substance of the mercy promised.

1. For the Figure; by the Glory and defence, a double consort, or two pairs of things seem to be intended; 1. The Ark and the Mercy seat. 2. The Tabernacle and the pillar of fire.

For the first, the Ark is oftentimes called the Glory of God; Plal. 78. 61. He gave his strength into Captivity, and his Glory into the hand of his enemies. Where he speaks of the surprisal of the Ark by the Philistines; which when it was accomplished, Phineas his wife called her son Ichabod, and said the Glory is departed. 1 Sam. 4. 21.

2. The word which we have rendered a defence properly signifies a covering; as was the mercy seat, the covering of the Ark. So that upon the Glory shall be a defence, is as much as unto you, the mercy seat shall be on the Ark, or you shall have the mercy represented and intimated thereby.

2. The

The Presence of Christ with a People.

6.

2. The *Tabernacle* and *cloud*, or *pillar of fire*, are also called to mind; so the words are expressive, of that figure of Gods gracious presence with his people; which we have recounted, *Exod. 40. 34. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the Glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.* So it continued, the *Glory of God* was in the *tabernacle*, and the *cloud* upon it, or *over it*; as the word here is; and so *upon all the glory there was a defence.*

I need not stay to prove that all those things were typical of Christ; he was the end of the law, represented by the *Ark*, which did contain it, *Rom. 10. 3, 4.* he was the *mercy seat*; as he is called and said to be, *Rom. 3. 25. 1 Joh. 2. 2.* Covering the law from the eye of justice, as to those that are interested in him; he was the *tabernacle* and *temple* wherein dwelt the *Glory of God*, and which was recompensed with all *pledges* of his gracious presence.

Apply then this promise to Gospel times, and the substance of it is comprehended in these two propositions.

1. *The presence of Christ with any people, is the Glory of any people.* This is the glory here spoken of, as is evident to any one that will but read over the second verse, and consider its influence into these words. *The branch of the Lord shall be to them beautiful and glorious, and upon all the glory shall be a defence.*

2. *The presence of God in special providence over a people, attends the presence of Christ in grace with a people;* if Christ the glory be with them, a defence shall be upon them; what lies else in *allusion* to the *mercy-seat*, not drawn forth in these propositions, may be afterwards insisted on.

For the first; what I pray else should be so. This is their *Glory* or they have none; is it in their *number*, that they are great, many, and populous? God thinks not so, nor did he when he gave an account of his thoughts of his People

People of old, *Deut. 7. 7.* The Lord said: *not for his love upon you nor chose you, because you were more in number then any people, for you were the fewest of all people.* God made no reckoning of numbers; he chose that People that was fewest of all. He esteemed well of them, when they were but a few men in number; yea very few and strangers; *Psal. 105. 12.* You know what it cost David in being seduced by *Sathan* into the contrary opinion. He thought the glory of his People had been in their number, and caused them to be reckoned; but God taught him his error, by taking off with a dreadful judgement no small portion of the number he sought after. There is nothing more common in the *Scripture* then for the Lord to speak contempt of the multitude of any people, as a thing of nought; and he takes pleasure to confound them by weak and despised means. Is it in their wisdom and counsel, their understanding for the ordering of their affairs? Is that their glory? Why, see how God derides the *Prince of Tyrus*, who was lifted up with an apprehension hereof; and counted himself as God, upon that account; *Ezek. 27. 3, 4, 5. 6. &c.* The issue of all is; *Thou shalt be a man and no God in the hand of him that slays thee; God will let him see in his ruin and destruction, what a vain thing that was, which he thought his glory.* Might I dwell upon it I could evince unto you these two things.

1. That whereas the end of all humane wisdom, in nations or the Rulers of them is, to preserve humane society in peace and quietness, within the several bounds and allotments that are given unto them by the providence of God, it so comes to pass for the most part through the righteous judgment and wise disposal of God, that it hath a contrary end, and bringeth forth contrary effects throughout the world, Do not the inhabitants of the earth, generally

any owe all their disturbance, sorrow, and blood to the wise contrivances of a few men, nor knowing how to take the Law of their proceedings from the mouth of God, but laying their deep counsels and politick contrivances in a subserviency to their lusts and ambition. And what *Glory* is there in that which almost constantly brings forth contray effects to its own proper end and intendment?

2. That God delights to mix a *spirit of giddinesse*, error, and folly in the counsels of the *wise men* of the world; making them reel and stagger in their way like a drunken man, that they shall not know what to do, but commonly in their greatest concernments, fix upon things, as devoid of true reason and sound wisdom, as any children or fools could close withal. *He taketh the wise in their own craftinesse, and the Counsel of the froward is carried headlong;* Job 5. 13. 14. so at large Isa. 19. 11. 12, 13, 14. and now where is their glory? I could give instances of both these, and that plentifully in the dayes, and seasons that have passed over our own heads.

The like also, may be said of the strength, the power, the armies of any people; if their number and wisdom be vain, be *no Glory*, their strength which is but the result or exurgency of their number and wisdom, must needs be so also. But you have all this summed up together. Jer. 9. 23. 24. Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let no the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord: It is neither wisdom nor might nor riches, that is our *Glory*; but our interest in *Jehovah* onely.

This I say is in the presence of Christ only: Now Christ may be said to be present with a people two wayes.

1. In respect of the dispensation of his Gospel amongst them, the profession of it, and subjection to the Ordinances thereof. The Gospel of Christ is a *blessed Gospel*, a *glorious Gospel*, in its self, and unto them that embrace it. But yet this profession seperated from the Root from which it ought to spring, is not the Glory of any people; *Christ is not their glory who are his shame*. Empty profession is the shame of Christ in the world; and shall not be others glory. The Apostle tells us that this may consist with a litter of unclean lusts, making them in whom it is abominable to God and man. 2 Tim. 3, 4. &c. If the bare *profession* of the truth, would render a nation *Glorious*, Oh how *glorious* were this nation. So would have been the people of old, who cryed the *temple of the Lord*, the *Temple of the Lord*. But when men profess the truth of Christ, but in their hearts and wayes maintain and manifest an enmity to the power of that truth, and to all of Christ that is in reality in the world, this is no *Glory*.

2. Christ is present with a people in and by his *spirit*, dwelling in their hearts by his *spirit* and faith, uniting them to himself: I do not distinguish this from the former as inconsistent with it; for though the former may be without this, yet where *this* is, there will be the former also. *Profession* may be without *union*, but *union* will bring forth *profession*. There may be a form of Godliness without power: but where the power is, there will be the appearance also. Now when Christ is thus present with a people, that is, they are united to him by his spirit, they are members of his *mystical body*, that is, their *glory*. Be they *few* or *many* in a *nation* that are so, they are the *Glory* of that nation, and nothing else: and where there is the most of them, there is the most *glory*: and where

10 *The presence of Christ with a people.*

they are diminished, there the glory is eclipsed. Christ *mystical*, the Head, and his body is all the glory that is in the world. If any nation be *glorious* and honourable above others, it is because of this presence of Christ in that nation. Christ is the glory of his Saints. Isa. 4.2. In him they glory: Isa. 45.25. And the Saints are Christs glory, 2 Cor. 8.23. They are the glory of Christ: and he glories in them, as God of Job, to Saiban. *Seest thou my servant Job*, Chap. 1.8. He doth as it were glory in him against the wickednesse of the world; and Christ in them, and they in him, are all the glory of this world.

So Zech. 2.8. Christ was in the pursuit of the collection of his people from their dispersion: what seeks he after; what looks he for? he goes after the glory. Even to finde out them who are Gods glory in the world.

Now this is the *Glory of any people* upon a three fold account.

1 This alone makes them *honourable* and *precious* before God. So says God of them Isa. 43.1. *I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine*; those are they of whom I spake: what then, v. 4. *thou art precious in my sight, thou art honourable, I have loved thee*; how doth God manifest his valuation of them v. 3. Why he will give all the world, the greatest, mightiest, wealthiest nations for them, v. 5. all is as nothing in comparison of them, who are his portion and the lot of his inheritance. The Lord keep this alive upon your hearts, that, that may be in your eyes the glory of this nation, on the account whereof, it is *precious* to God, and *honourable* in his sight.

2 Because this *presence* of Christ makes men *comely* and *excellent* in themselves; with what eye soever the world may look upon them. The whole world out of Christ

lies

lies in evil, under the curſe of God, and deſilement of ſin: in all the glittering ſhews of their wealth and riches, in the ſtate and magnificence of their governments, the beaury of their laws and order, (as they relate to their perſons) they are in the eye of God a *filthy* and an abominable thing, a thing that his ſoul loatheth. Curſe and ſin will make any thing to be ſo: but now Chriſt is to them and in them beautiful and glorious. *Iſai. 4.2.* Chriſt is ſo in himſelf, and he is ſo unto them: and makes them to be ſo. There is through him *beauty* and *excellency* and *comlineſſe*, every thing that may make them lovely and acceptable. That the world looks not on them as ſuch, is not their fault, but the worlds miſery: it looked on their maſter Chriſt himſelf, the brightneſſe of his fathers glory, who is altogether lovely, the chiefſt of ten thouſand, with no other eye. *Iſa. 53.2.* They are ſo *in themſelves*, and are ſo to Chriſt; being expoſed indeed to many temptations, oftentimes they are made black and ſully by them: but yet they are *comely* ſtill. *Cant. 1. 5.* The wayes whereby they are made black for the moſt part, we have expreſſed *v.6.* when the Sun ſhines on them, and they are made keepers of the *Vineyard* it comes upon them. *Proſperity*, and publick employment oftentimes ſo ſully them, that they are made black to the reproach of the world: but yet to Chriſt who forgives, and waſhes them, they are *comely*. Yea this is all the excellency that is in the world. Sin with honour, with wealth, with power, with wiſdom, is a deformed and contemptible thing: it is grace onely that is beautiful and *glorious*: it is the *gratious* onely that are *excellent* in the earth. *Pſal. 16.3.*

3. This alone makes any truly uſeful unto others; and that either for *preſervation*, or *proſperity*.

1. Here lies the preſervation of any nation from ruine.

Isai. 65. 8. 9. Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants sake, that I may not destroy them all. This is the blessing in the cluster, the hidden and secret blessing, for the sake whereof, the whole is not destroyed. The remnant left by the Lord of hosts Isa. 1. 9. that keeps the whole from being as Sodom or Gomorrah.

If *Elisba* a servant of the Lord told the King of *Israel* in his distresse, that if he had not regarded the presence of *Jehoshaphat* the King of *Judah* he would not so much as have spoken to him; how much more will the Lord himself let a people know in their distresse, that were it not for the regard he hath to his secret ones, he would not take the least notice (as to relief) of them or their concerns. Sodom could not be destroyed untill *Lot* was delivered. The whole world owes its preservation and being, to them, whom they make it their businesse to root out of it: they are as the foolish woman, that pulls down her own house with both her hands. It is not your counsels, you know how they have been divided, intangled, ensnared, it is not your Armies, as such; what have they been to oppose against the mighty floods that have risen up in this nation; and they also have been as a reed driven to and fro, with the wind, (Mankind is no better; *John* the Baptist sayes it of himself) but it is this presence of Christ in and with his, that hath been the preservation of *England*, in the midst of all the changes and revolutions that we have been exercised withall. Mich. 5. 5.

2. Not onely preservation but prosperity is from hence also Mich. 5. 7. And the remnant of *Jacob* shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grasse, that tarrieth not for man, that waies not for the sons of

of men. It is the *Remnant of Jacob*, of whom he speaks; that is, *this people of Christ*, with whom he is so present as hath been manifested; and where are they; they are in the *midst of many people*, in their *inside*, in their bowels; they are woven by their Relations and imployments into the *bowels* of the nations; and on that account there is neither *this* nor any *Nation* about us, but shall spin out their mercies or their misery from their own bowels; their providential fates lie in them; as is their deportment towards this remnant, such will their issue be. But what shall this remnant do? why it shall be *as dew from the Lord*, and *as showers, on the grasse*. It shall be that alone which makes them *fruitful*, flourishing and prosperous; it may be it will be so, provided there be good assistance, counsel and strength, to carry on their affaires: yea blessed be God for *counsels*, and for *armies*, he hath made them useful to us: but the truth is, the blessing of this dew depends not on them, it *tavrieth not for man it waiteth not for the sons of man*: it will be a blessing, let men do what they will; it depends not on their *uncertain* and *unstable Counsel*, on their weak and feeble strength. This Remnant is as the *Ark* in the house of *Obed Edom*, as *Joseph* in the house of *Potiphar*, all is blessed and prospered for their sakes. It is not the glorious *battlements*, the painted *windows*, the crouching *Anticks*, that support a building, but the stones that lie unseen in, or upon the earth. It is often those who are *despised* and trampled on, that bear up the weight of an whole nation. All the fresh springs of our blessings are in *Sion*.

It were easy to manifest that in all our late *Revolutions* we have turned on this hinge. According as the presence of Christ with his people, in the power of his spirit hath received entertainment in these *nations*, so hath our state
and

14. *The presence of Christ with a people.*

and condition been. For many yeers before the beginning of these troubles the Land had been full of oppression, I mean in respect to the people of God. Poverty, imprisonment, dangers, banishment, reproaches were their portion. God was long *patient*; at length the height of their Adversaries came to this, that they set not themselves so much against their *persons* or wayes, as against the spirit of Christ in and with them, that was made their reproach, that the *by-word* wherwith they were despised in the mouthes of their adversaries, and the prophane multitude: when things were come to this, that the very *presence of Christ* with his people, was made the direct object of the hatred of men, the Lord could bear it no longer; but sware by himself, that *time should be given* them no more: in this very house he raised up Saviours and deliverers on mount *Sion* to judge the mount of *Edom*; and how did he carry on his work, not by *might*, nor by *power*, but *by the spirit of the Lord of hosts*: as Zac. 4.6. Even by that *very spirit* which had been reviled and despised. Give me leave to say, the work of *judging this nation* was carried on by the *presence of the spirit of Christ* with his in faith and prayer: it was not by *prudence* of counsels, or *strength* of Armies above that of our enemies, that we prevailed, but by *faith* and prayer; and if any one be otherwise minded, I leave him for his resolution to the judgement of the great day, when all *transactions* shall be called over again: The Adversaries themselves I am sure acknowledged it, when they openly professed, that there was nothing left for them to *overcome*, or to *overcome* them, but the prayers of the *fanatick Crew*.

After some years contending, when the Lord had begun to give us *deliverance* by breaking the power of the enemy, at least in this *nation*, besides those *bitter divisions* that

that fell out among the people of God themselves, and the backsliding of some, to the cause and principles they had opposed, this *evil* was also found rising again amongst us; *slighting, blaspheming*, contemning under several pretences, of the *Spirit* and presence of Christ in and with his Saints: You know what ensued; what *shakings*, what *revolutions*, with new wars, bloodshed, and desolation, over the three Nations. And give me leave to remember you as one that had opportunity to make observations of the passages of providence in those dayes, in all the three Nations, in the times of our greatest hazards, give me leave I say, to remember you, that the *publick declarations* of those employed in the affaires of this Nation, in the face of the enemies, their addresses unto God among themselves, their *prayers* night and day, their private discourses one with another, were, that the preservation of the *interest of Christ* in and with his people was the great thing that lay in their eyes; and that if it were not so, they desired that God would *stop* them in their way, yea rather cause their *carcasses* to fall in the high places of the field, then to prosper them in that which should be *contrary* thereunto: and we know what ensued. How we have used our mercies is another matter: this was the Principle that prevailed with God and man.

Pse. 1. If you desire the *Glory of these Nations*, labour to promote the *interest of Christ* in these nations; I am not speaking unto you about *disputable* things, differences among the people of God themselves, nor am I interposing my advise in your *civil* affaires, but I speak in general about those with whom Christ is present, by his spirit, his chosen ones, against whom there is an *old enmity* in Sathan and the world. The glory of

of these nations is, that there is a *people in them*, that have Christ in the midst of them; let it be your businesse to take care for that Glory. But how shall we do it?

1. Labour *personally*, every one of you to get Christ in your own hearts. I am very far from thinking that a man may not be lawfully called to magistracy, if he be not a believer; or that being called, he should be impeded in the execution of his trust, and place, because he is not so; I shall not suspend my obedience whilst I enquire after my Lawful Governors conversion; but yet this I lay considering that I cannot much value any good, but what comes in by the way of *promise*, I confesse I can have no great expectation from them whom God *loves* not, delights not in; if any be otherwise minded, I shall not contend with him; but for this I will contend with all the world, that it is your duty to labour to assure Christ in your own hearts, even that you may be the better fitted for the work of God in the world. It is the promise of God to Sion; that her *officers shall be peace, and her exaltours righteousness*, Isa. 60. 17. and then shall she call her walls salvation, and her gates praise: v. 18. It will be little advantage to any, to have the work of God raised in the world, and not to have the foundation stone laid in their hearts: If there should be in any of you an enmity unto Christ, and the power of Godliness, an hatred and contempt of the people of God, an evil heart of unbelief, an evil course of life, *worldliness*, *oppression*, vanity of minde, &c. would it advantage you to be entrusted with power in these nations? Would it not hasten your destruction, and increase your account? It is a noble promise that we have. Isa. 32. 17. *And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.* It is a Gospel righteousness

oulness that is spoken of; and that not of the *cause* as such onely, but of the *Persons*; the *Persons* being righteous, and that with the righteousness of Christ, the effects mentioned, shall follow their righteous undertakings; we have peace now, outward peace; but alas, we have not *quietness*; and if any thing may be done that may give us *quietness*, yet perhaps we may not have *assurance*; we may be quickly shaken again; but when the *righteousness* of the *Persons*, and *cause* meet, all the rest will follow.

2. Set your selves to oppose that *overflowing flood* of *prophanesse*, and opposition to the power of Godliness, that is spreading it self over this Nation. Know you not that the Nation begins to be overwhelmed by the powrings out of a profane, wicked, carnal spirit, full of rage and contempt of all the *work of Reformation* that hath been attempted amongst us? Do you not know that if the former *prophane principle* should prove predominant in this Nation, that it will quickly return to its former station and condition, and that with the price of your dearest blood; and yet is there not already such a *visible prevalency* of it, that in many places, the very *profession* of Religion is become a scorn; and in others, those old formes and wayes taken up with greediness, which are a badge of apostacy from all former engagements and actings; and are not these sad evidences of the Lords departing from us; if I should lay before you a comparison between the degrees of the appearances of the Glory of God in this nation, the steps whereby it came forth, and those wherby it seems almost to be departing, it would be a matter of admiration and lamentation; I pray God we loose not our ground faster then we won it. Were our hearts *kept* up to our good old principles

ciples on which we first ingaged, it would not be so with us; but innumerable evils have laid hold upon us; and the temptations of these dayes have made us a woful prey, *gray haires are here and there*, and it will be no wonder if *our ruine* should come with more speed, then did our deliverance. O then set your selves in the gap; by all wayes and means oppose the growth of an *evil, prophane, Common, malignant spirit* amongst us. But I hast.

3. *Value*, encourage, and close with them, *in* and with whom is this presence of Christ. They are the Glory of the Nation; it's *peace*, safety and prosperity will be found wrapped up in them. I know there lie divers considerable objections against the practise of this duty; I shall name some few of them, and leave the exhortation unto your considerations.

1. Who are *those* persons in whom is this presence of Christ? are they such as professe indeed *Religion*, but neglect all *Rules of righteousness*; that would be accounted *Godly*, but care not to be *honest*? the *markes* of whose miscarriages are written on their foreheads; are not these so far from being the *Glory*, that they are the *shame* of any nation. I pray give me leave to endeavour the rolling away of this great stone of offence, in these few ensuing considerations.

1. Then I shall willingly lay this down for a principle, *that he is not Religious, who is not also Righteous*; as also I shall not much value his *Righteousnesse*, who is not *Religious*. He that is righteous doth *righteousnesse*; he doth so, in the bent of his spirit and course of his wayes and walkings. If a man be *fromard, beady, highminded, sensual, unjust, oppressive, worldly, selfseeking, a hater of good men, false, treacherous*, let him pretend to what he will; that mans religion is in vain; he may have a *form of Godliness*.

The Charge of the People 19
ness, but he hath not the power of it. This principle we shall agree upon;

2. There have been in the dayes wherein we live, many *false professors, hypocrites*, that have thought gain to be Godlinesse, by reason of whose wicked lives, wayes and walking, the *name* of God hath been evil spoken of; and *woe* to them by whom these offences are come; but yet also *woe* to the *world* because of offences; if these offences turn off men, from an esteem of the Remnant of Christ in whom is his presence, *woe to them also*. I acknowledge these dayes have abounded with offences; but *woe* to them who are turned aside by them, from owning the portion and inheritance of Christ.

3. It cannot be denied, but that many of them who do belong unto Christ, have woefully miscarried in these dayes. O tell it not in *Gath*, publish it not in *Askelon*; Oh that our souls could mourn in secret on that account, that we could go *backward*, and cover the nakednesse and folly of one another; but alas, this hath been far from being our frame of spirit; we have every one spread the *failings* of his brother, before the face of men and devils; but yet notwithstanding these miscarriages, those that are the *people* of Christ, are his *people* still; and he loves them still, whether we will or no; and commonly those who are least able to bear with the miscarriages of others, have most of their own.

4. That differences of *judgments* in civil affaires, or *Church matters* ought not presently to be made Arguments of men; not being *Righteous*. Some men think that none are *Righteous* that are not of their principles; then which principle there is nothing more unrighteous. Let men that differ from them walk never so *holily*, professe never so *strictly*; yet if they are not of their *minde*, they are not

Righteous. If men are offended on such accounts, it is because they will be so.

5. This hath ever been the way of the men of the world; that when any have been *unblamable* and zealous upon the account of *Religion*, they will attempt their Reputation, though without any ground or colour, upon the account of righteousness. So suffered the Christians of old; and so the *Puritans* of former dayes, unjustly and falsely, as God will judge and declare. The world then in this matter is not to be beleaved; the common reports of it are from the devil, *the accuser of the brethren*; who accuses them in the same manner before God night and day. These are but pretences, whereby men ignorant of the mystery of the Gospel, and the power of Grace, harden themselves to their ruine.

6. This *remnant* of Christ with whom his presence is, who are the glory of a nation, is to be found onely amongst the *professors* of a nation. For although of those who are *professors*, there may be many *bad*, yet of those that are not *professors*, there is not one good. Where there is faith there will be a *profession*. If I should not know well where to finde them; I am sure I know where I cannot finde them; I cannot finde them, in the wayes of the world, and conformity to it; in darknesse, ignorance, neglect of dutie, and utter unacquaintednesse with Gospel truths, the gifts and graces of the spirit; there I cannot finde them; I shall not say of them, *behold the Lords anointed*, let their outward worldly appearance be what it will, now by the help of these considerations, those who have in themselves principles of life and light in Christ, will or may be, setting aside their temptations inabled to discover this generation of the Lords delight; and for others, I cannot take down the enmity that God hath set up.

up. So then notwithstanding this objection I shall certainly esteem this remnant of Christ to lie among those, who haveing received *Gospel light, and gospel gifts* evidently, do make also profession of Gospel grace, *union* and *communion* with Christ, seperation from the world; and the wayes of it, in a conversation acceptable unto God in Christ; and to this portion shall I say as *Ruth* to *Naomi*. Let what will be glorious, or uppermost in the world, *whether thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; the Lord do so to me and more also, if ought part thee and me;* with them let my portion be, and the portion of my family, whatever their lot and condition in this world shall be; and the Lord say *Amen*.

Obj. 1. But it will be said secondly, we are still at a losse; for what woful divisions are there amongst this generation of professors? some are for one way, and some for another; some say one sort are the people of God, some another; some say the *Prelatists* are so, some the *Presbyterians*, some the *Independents*, some the *Anabaptists*, some the *fifth Monarchy men*, some others, and on whom should the valuation pleaded for be cast.

Ans. 1. Some do say so, and plead thus, it cannot be denied; but the truth is, the greater is their weaknesse and folly. It is impossible men acquainted with the Spirit of Christ and the Gospel, should say so, unless they were under the power of one *Temptation* or other. But it is no party, but the party of Christ in the world, and against the world, the seed of the woman, against the seed of the serpent that I am pleading for; that men as to their interest in Christ should be judged from such *denominations*, as though they make a great *noise* in the world, yet indeed signifie very little things in themselves, is most unrighteous.

ous, and unequal ; nor will men finde peace, in such rash and precipitate judgments.

2. There may be many divisions amongst the people of God, and yet none of them be divided from Christ the head. The branches of a tree may be entangled by strong winds, and stricken against one another, and yet none of them broken off from the tree its self ; and when the storm is over every one possesses its own place in quietnesse beauty and fruitfulness. Whilest the strong winds of temptations are upon the followers of Christ, they may be tossed and entangled, but not being broken off from the root, when he shall say to the winds, *peace, be still*, they will flourish again in peace and beauty.

3. Let not Sathan cheat you of your duty, by this trivial objection. If he can keep you from duty, whilst he can make divisions ; he hath you sure enough. They of whom I speak, be they under what reproach or obloquies soever, they are all true men, all the children of one father, though they are unhappily fallen out by the way.

Vse. 2. Of encouragement to those that have the presence of Christ with them in the manner declared ; they shall be safe ; In vain it is for all the world to attempt their security ; either they shall not prevail, or they shall mischief themselves by their own prevalency. Mich. 5. 8. As they shall be a dew where they are appointed for a blessing, so as a *Lion*, where they are oppressed. Destruction will come forth on their account, and that terribly like the destruction of a *Lion*, speedily, in passing through it shall be done. And whence is it that this feeble generation shall be as a *Lion* ? It is from the presence of Christ among them, who is the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, and to honour them, he assigns that to them, which is his own proper work ; let men take heed
how

how they provoke this *Lion*: for the present (Gen. 49.9.) he is *gone up from the prey*, he stoopeth down, he coucheth as a *Lion* and as an old *Lion*, who shall rouse him up? He hath taken his prey in these Nations, in the destruction of many of his enemies: he seemeth now to take his rest, to couch down, his indignation being overpast, but who shall rouse him up? Why what if he be provoked? what if he be stirred up? why he will not lie down, *untill he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.* Numb. 23.24. There is no delivery from him: No, but what if there be a strong combination of many against him, will he not cease and give over? Isa. 31.4. Be they who they will, the *sheep* of the people, be they never so many a *multitude of them*, let them lift up their voice and rage never so much, all is one, he will perform his work and accomplish it: untill you have him in the condition mentioned, Mai. 6.3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Blessed are the people that are under his care and conduct, yea blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.

FINIS.

A CATALOGUE of other Books published by Dr. OWEN, and sold by Philemon Stephens, at the Gilded Lion in St. Pauls Church yard.

1. A Display of the Errors of the Arminians, concerning the old Palagian Idol Free will, the new Goddesse Contingency, &c. in 14. Chapters, 4.
2. *Salus eorum Sanguis Jesu.* A treatise of the Redemption and reconciliation that is in the blood of Christ, with the merit thereof, and the satisfaction wrought thereby; wherein the whole controversie of Universal Redemption is full dicussed, in four Books, with an Apendex upon occasion of a late Book published by Mr. *Johus Sprigge*, containing erroneous doctrine.
3. The Duty of Pastors and people distinguished, touching the means to be used by the people (distinct from Church Officers) for encreasing of Divine Knowledge.
4. *Escol*, or rules of Direction, for the walking of the Saints in fellowship, According to the order of the Gospel.
5. A fast Sermon to the Parliament, Aprill 29. 1646. on Acts 16. 9. *A vision appeared to Paul in the night* &c. with an appendix touching Church Government.

6. *Eden 22^{ar}*, being an exposition on the first ten verses of the third Chapter of the prophesie of *Habakkuk*, in two Sermons, one at *Calcheſter*, and the other at *Rumford*, in memorial of the Deliverance of *Essex County* and Committee. 1648.

7. A Fast Sermon to the Parliament. *Jan. 31. 1948.* on *Jer. 15. 19. 20.* *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them*, with a discourse about Toleration, and the duty of the Civil Magistrate about Religion.

8. A Fast Sermon to the Parliament. April 19. 1649. on *Heb. 12. 27.* And this word, *Tetence more*, signifieth the removing of *ibofe things*, &c.

9. The glory of the Church in its Religion to Christ, in two Sermons, one at *Barwick*, the other at *Edenbrough*, on *Eſay. 56. 7.* *For mine house shall be called an house of Prayer for all People.*

10. The labouring Saints diſmiſſion to reſt. A Sermon at the Funeral of *H. Ireton*, Lord Deputy of Ireland, on *Daniel 12. 13.* *But go thou thy way, till the end be: for thou shalt reſt, and ſtand in the lot, at the end of the dayes.*

11. A Sermon to the Parliament at their Solemn Fast held *October 30. 1656.* on *2 Chron. 15. 2.* *And he went out to meet Aſa, the Lord is with you &c.*

12. A Treatiſe unfolding the Saints Fellowship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each perſon diſtinctly.

A Commentary on the 12. ſmall Prophets by Mr. *John Trap.*

A Practical Exposition on theſe four Pſalmes viz. The 27. 84. 85. 87. by Mr. *Thomas Pierſon.*

Mr. *George Herberts* Poems reprinted, with an alphabetical Table, together with the Synagoue, being divine Poems the third time enlarged, in imitation of Mr. *Herberts* Poems.

Paralipomena Orthographiæ, Erymologiæ proſodiæ, una cum Scholiis ad canones de genere ſubſtantivorum de Anomaliis præteritiſ et ſupini� verborum Syntaxi carminum ratione, et figuris, collecta ex optimis autoribus in quatuor libris, per Joh. Danes, 4^{to}.

The holy life, and happy death of *J. Bruen*, of *Bruen Stapleford* in *Cheshire* Eſq; exhibiting variety of memorable paſſages, uſeful for all ſorts of people, as a path-way to Piety and Charity, By *W. Hind.*

Five books publiſhed by Mr. *Robert Abbot* viz. 1. A Mothers Catechiſm, wherein chief principles of Chriſtian are Religion briefly propounded, fully expounded uſefully applyed, with 3. Sermons: 1. on *Pſal. 19. 12* *Who can underſtand his error.* 2. on *Mat. 13. 45. 46.* *A Merchant ſeeking pearls.* &c. 3. *Pſal. 31. 25.* *Into thy hand &c.*

2. The young mans warning peece, at the burial of *W. R.* with a Hiſtory of his ſinful life, and woful death, with a diſcourſe of the uſe of ſuch examples.

3. 4. Sermons: 1. On *Judg. 11. 27.* *The Lord the Judge.* &c. 2. *Mat. 7. 12.* *Whatſoever you would men ſhould do to you, &c.* 3. & 4. 1 *Tim. 1. 19.* *Holding faith and.* &c.

4. A trial of Church forſakers, proving the Church of Eng. to be a true church, hath a true Miniſtery and true worſhip. *Heb. 10. 25.* *Not forſaking the aſſembly.*

5. A Chriſtian Family, Built up by God a Treatiſe directing all Governors of Families how to act. on *Pſal. 127. 1.*

Mr. *E. Wingates* *Ariſtmerick* the 3. Edition digeſted into a more familiar method and very much augmented by *John Keſey.*

A 3

